

THE LIFE
MAGNIFICENT

GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

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I WANT you to pay some visits with me. I want to introduce you to certain loftinesses and magnificences of Life which I hope may thrill us, tear down for us certain of our prison-bars and fetters, burst for us—at all events for the time being—certain of our bondages, discover to us a Freedom heretofore, perhaps, hidden, give us a hitherto unexperienced, glowing sense of the glory of Life, of the tremendous power and purpose within us whereby we shall proceed from triumph to triumph, from joy to joy, from peace to Peace.

I want to introduce to you certain majesties of Life which, like attracting like, shall arouse in us the majestic, so that in our daily lives and ordinary occupations we may live greatly and nobly, splendidly, powerfully, purposefully, radiantly. I shall try to sound the note of loftiness, of magnificence, of majesty, that in us its

counterpart may sound in eager instant response and that our whole being may become readjusted to its splendid rhythm. Not that this can be achieved at once. Time must be called into play. But Time is supremely elastic. We can compress it into nothing or we can stretch it almost, but not quite, indefinitely.

Now if I am to evoke the magnificent I must endeavour to put ourselves in sharp contrast with the ordinary. Not that the ordinary cannot be magnificent. Walt Whitman has somewhere said that he could imagine a life which might be that of the average man in average circumstances, and still grand and heroic. I entirely agree with him, for implicitly, latently, everything is grand and heroic. And I would venture on the assertion that rightly looked at—but there lies the difficulty—everything *is* grand and heroic, for everything is grandly and heroically conceived, planned, executed, as I shall hope later on to show you. But the point is that for the

most part we live in the small, that is in the unnecessarily small, in that which we ourselves make small. We could be freer than we are. We could be bigger than we are. We could be happier than we are. We could know more than we do know. Almost everything about us is less to us than it might be, than it really is, and in this less-ness, in this unnecessary smallness, lies the relative negation of the grand and heroic, of the magnificent and the splendid.

Let me try to put you in the way of challenging yourselves by holding up before you a mirror or two in which you shall see yourselves as Your Selves, not necessarily Your Selves as these Selves shall be so far as regards mere shape and form and build, but more the Purged Essence or Fire of Your Selves—the Glittering Stuff of which all Great Selves are made. You will, I hope, as you look into one mirror after another, exclaim: “Ah! Exactly as I shall be one day.” Or you may cry: “No, not

as I shall be in thought or feeling or action, but surely as I shall be in spirit." And then, I further hope, you will compare yourself out of the mirror with yourself in the mirror and become aroused to a faint reflection of that Divine Dissatisfaction which brings universes into being.

Let me, for example, hold up before you the mirrors of four Great Selves—Byron, Shelley, Keats, Henry Savage Landor, four undoubted rebels against the ordinary, the small, who paid for their challenge with their lives, but who helped to free England with their lives. I have no time to help you to look at yourselves in each one of these. But look at yourselves in Byron, or rather let Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and Byron help you, for Quiller-Couch himself is of the stuff that rebels are made and knows and loves a rebel when he sees one. What does he say of Byron?

Henceforward he stands opposed to them (the heavenly powers): but he stands up. You may smile at any man—small bi-forked

creature that he is—standing up, arraigning, questioning, denouncing the higher powers; but you must acknowledge the right of the challenge. If God created man in his image, man has a right (shall we not even say, a duty?) to erect himself to the fullest inch of that image, and ask questions. Does it not, at any rate, argue a certain nobility of mind (if exorbitant) in one betrayed by his fellow-creatures, that he walks straight up and has it out with the Creator himself? (*Studies in Literature*, p. 17.)

Now how does Byron stand up? He stands up as he prompts "Cain to demand of God himself, concerning Adam's transgression," and remember that in this he speaks for himself:

What had I done in this?—I was unborn:
I sought not to be born; nor love the state
To which that birth has brought me. Why
did he

Yield to the Serpent and the woman? or
Yielding—why suffer?

What was there in this?
The tree was planted, and why not for him?
If not, why place him near it, where it grew
The fairest in the centre? They have but
One answer to all questions. "'Twas his
will,

And *he* is good." How know I that?

Because

He is all-powerful, must all-good, too,
follow?

I want you to look closely at yourselves in that. What a free challenge, unreserved, probing down to the roots, into the heights. And how significant when we consider the times in which the challenge was made. Says Quiller-Couch:

To take hold upon Genesis and shake it, as Byron and Shelley did in an age (with difficulty conceivable by us) when even to venture a doubt that the Universe came into being in six days of twenty-four hours by the clock was to evoke every curse of the orthodox, is an act of intellectual courage, and remains that in despite of Goethe and his dictum that "the moment Byron begins to reflect he is a child". It may be simple: but it is, or was, a thought; and to utter and maintain it, against the England of Byron's day, required a mind very high above childishness: nay, a mind that had some measure of the Titanic: for, be the thought itself simple, the challenge is the grand challenge of Prometheus.

It is indeed the Titanic that I look for when I seek the Life Magnificent. I seek

the Promethean Fire. I do not seek the perfect life, for I am tolerably sure that in this outer world at least I shall not find it. But I seek lightning flashes even though they may occur at rare intervals, even though they may be surrounded by darkness. To be capable of even a single lightning flash is to lay the foundation of the Life Magnificent, is to show that the Fire Promethean is stirring within. Byron may have had his faults. It is easy to pick holes in greatness, for in the outer world it must ever be more or less intermittent, and the truly great are likely to have their valleys of weakness no less than their mountains of splendour. The valleys? Of course. Let me rather cast my eyes unto the mountains and myself aspire to their towering majesty. I think that in the passage I have quoted to you from Byron I have disclosed to you, even though it be through mists, a Byronic Everest the like of which each one of us would do well to be eager to add to our own mountain-ranges,

if we possess any. And I ask you to make a challenge of yourselves to see if perchance in you is something of that spirit of Byron which made him a veritable Pillar of Fire in an age of cold and tyrannical stolidity. How do you look in this light of Byron? How do you challenge to-day as Byron challenged yesterday?

But I shall hold up before you a mirror of a more disturbing kind, a mirror of many facets, yet with a sum-total of magnificence despite them all. I will read to you a pen-picture of one of the greatest masters of music in the West—Beethoven:

A man . . . human above all things. He sprang from lowly and insignificant people. His mother was a cook, his father a drunken musician. His childhood was a succession of miseries. Lessons of a sottish teacher after being dragged, drugged with sleep, from his cot in the middle of the night. Poverty . . . privation . . . toil . . . a loveless life, but never discouragement. The world and the woes that man makes cannot extinguish the divine fire. Recognition came to him finally.

In middle age—in an age when republicanism was treason, he dared be republican even while he commanded the support of courtiers and princes. When to be liberal was to be heretic, he lived a large religion of humanism—without disrespect to established orthodoxy. When perfumed aristocrats eyed askance his stodgy figure, grotesque manners, absurd garb, he snarled and flashed and played the pettiness out of them. Too great to be ignored, too eccentric to be loved, he lived, one of the strangest figures in all history. Passionate in his loves and hates, ruthless toward opposition or criticism of friend or enemy, always in love and never married, ever honourable and never chivalrous, tender in sentiment and Rabelaisian in humour, simply thinking sublime thoughts . . . Beethoven!

Tragedy followed him like a hound. His last years were lived in a whirling void of silence. Silence!—while from within he drew the sounds that all the world but he could hear, and he of all the world should first have heard! Romantic, tragic, humorous man . . . human above all things . . . Beethoven!

Dark patches? Perhaps. But splendid lights making Beethoven's life a Life Magnificent. Storms, tempests, catastrophes

—many of them, perhaps, within, more, probably, without—seem the natural constituents of every Life Magnificent. There is no perfect equilibrium save at the very highest levels, levels which humanity as such does not reach. And the inference I draw is that whether we are looking at ourselves or at others the heights to which we climb matter infinitely more than the depths to which we fall. I would even go so far as to say that provided we can and do rise to heights we may safely ignore the falling to depths. What is really intolerable is a dead and unrelieved level of that which is neither height nor depth. Mediocrity is the only crime, not greatness—be it greatness in height or greatness in depth. As the poet Brown has so wisely said :

'Tis something to be great in any wise.

Discern, I beg of you, in the passage I have just read, all the unevenness of Beethoven, all the sordidness, if you like

to call it so. What does all this matter as compared with his music? Amidst all your unevenness, assuming you are big enough to be noticeably uneven, amidst all the apparent contradictions of your respective natures, amidst all those things for which the world may be condemning you, what have you, I ask, to correspond in any field whatever to the music of Beethoven, even faintly to correspond? Never mind what the world may think you have or lack. The world is very blind beyond the coarser wavelengths of life. What have you that takes you into your own heights, makes heights for you wherein you may from time to time dwell in happy glory, even though you are constrained to descend from these heights at very frequent intervals? What had Byron? What had Beethoven? What have you, though no doubt infinitely less?

We often say nowadays that we are living in tremendous times, that the world

is in a state of mighty cataclysm, that a new world is being born, that we are on the threshold of a new age. True, no doubt. But I ask of you to what extent you are drenched in it all, soaked through and through with it. Are you, too, living tremendously? Are you in a state of cataclysmic upheaval, at least in the sense—to quote Mr. Lloyd George—that into these few years you are consciously compressing the experiences that otherwise would have been spread out over centuries? Are you changing, changing, changing? Are you day by day digging ever deeper down to the very foundations of yourselves, so that you may even now be able to say that you are very near yourselves, very near Your Selves?

I am always delighted to hear that people are very much disturbed nowadays. Letters come to me in which is set forth the statement that Mr. Krishnamurti has been saying things which are disturbing numbers of people, or that Dr. Besant

makes pronouncements which it is very difficult to understand, or that Bishop Leadbeater takes a line which it is very difficult to reconcile with other lines. To tell you the truth, the other day I received a letter in the course of which the writer said that Dr. Besant seemed to be occupied in setting pronouncements up, while Mr. Krishnamurti seemed to be occupied in knocking them down. And you know that there are very many who cannot understand how some of us have the temerity to fly right in the face of Providence, as said to be represented by Krishnaji, as we continue to occupy ourselves with those dreadful forms and ceremonies of the Liberal Catholic Church !

Well, all this gives us plenty to choose from, and, as I have said, it is very good to be disturbed, since thus alone do we become aware of our ignorance in a manner which is likely to set our feet all the more quickly and determinedly upon the path of wisdom and experience. But

I do ask that those who are disturbed shall not visit their unsettled condition unpleasantly upon others, trying to convert them into their own "static," if I may borrow an apt wireless phrase. Disturbance is of two varieties—that which helps and that which hinders, and even the most skilful diagnostician will be unable to determine at the outset of the attack whether it be one or the other. Both, of course, have their root in ignorance. To be disturbed is to confess ignorance. Nothing is disturbing to the wise. Yet since none of us are truly wise, we need not be ashamed of being disturbed. But we must hope that we are being disturbed to good purpose, that we are being disturbed, shaken, out of our smaller selves into our larger selves, and not out of our small selves into our still smaller selves. It is not the disturbance which at all matters, but the direction which the disturbance takes. And it is in the hope of getting the direction right that I am

addressing you to-day on the Life Magnificent, so that you may have the wherewithal to avoid the pathway of contraction, so that you may be disturbed into a larger life.

Personally, I am very happy about all things. Some of you may think I am a remarkable contortionist, or perhaps illusionist or even delusionist, but I can assure you from the bottom of my heart that I am entirely at one with all our great leaders even though I am not always able to understand or to agree. I may be right or I may be wrong, but I know for myself what they are encompassing, and to me it is all of splendid purpose. I take my own line. I follow my own pathway. I go my own way. And when I say everything is of splendid purpose I do not mean that I am able to reconcile each utterance with every other utterance, or that I agree with everything everybody says. I do not. Yet I find everything helpful, illuminating, stimulating. Out of everything I

draw life, for where is life not? I am happy in our President, very happy ; I am very happy in Bishop Leadbeater ; I am very happy in Krishnaji ; I am very happy in Bishop Wedgwood ; I am very happy in Mr. Jinarajadasa. I am very happy in their messages. It is all profoundly interesting at the very least. And all the while I go my own way in my own way, happily to my own End, hoping that I leave others to mind their own business and to go their own ways in their own ways as happily as I go mine. I have no questions to ask. And there is nothing which cannot be helpful if you learn to look at it and to take it in an understanding way.

Sometimes, when you feel disturbed, try to remember that he or she who may be the cause of the disturbance is in fact but disturbing your ignorance so that it rises to the surface. Up to the time of the disturbance you may have been living in a fool's paradise, or, more politely, in the

paradise of an ignoramus. You may have been hitherto revolving in small circles, continually revolving in them, hardly for a moment passing outside them. You may have been exclusively using a well-worn set of thought and feeling counters. You may have grown so accustomed to these counters that you would feel lost without them, without their well-known feel. And all of a sudden strange unfamiliar thought and feeling counters become mixed up with these—different, clashing, stormful, angular, disruptive. Then do the pillars of your paradise begin to tremble. You are shocked, frightened, to find that the supports of your paradise are not quite as firm as you had thought. How comes it that our pillars tremble? Nothing, we thought, 'could make the slightest impression upon them. Yet we feel disturbed, unsettled. There is indeed a paradise-quake. Is there, then, something the matter with our paradise? We had thought our paradise eternal, at least so far as it

went. There might be something to add, yes; but surely little, if anything, to destroy or modify. Yet our paradise is trembling about us, and beneath our feet foundations crack. It all really amounts to this, that we have once again come face to face with death, and the fear of death of whatever kind is perhaps the most terrible fear dogging throughout so-called life the footsteps of the average individual. The fact is that death is continually taking place, but two varieties do not horrify us, we shall probably not designate them death at all—death that is obviously a change for the better, and death that we do not notice at all, or hardly notice at all. Some deaths we welcome; some we do not notice. But the death of a paradise seems a disaster, until we have learned that innumerable other paradises of loftier stature are waiting for us, that the birth of a more splendid paradise depends upon death taking place in the lesser, that we can

never for long be without a paradise at all. Every death of a paradise is *ipso facto* a change for the better. And life without death is impossible, for death is the process of change, and change is the process of life. In the midst of life are we indeed in death, and no less in the midst of death are we in life, for the process of death is the maintenance and assertion of life. Thus is death as continuous as life. While there is life there is death. Without death—lifelessness: if you sense what I mean. Hence, because disturbance means a dying and a death, therefore it means the opportunity to enter into a larger life, a life more magnificent, glimpses of which I am trying to give you that you may know for what to be on the look-out. I am sowing deaths in your midst to the end of glorious births. And you are well on the way if, while you are disturbed, you smile rather than frown, if you take the disturbance lightly, amusedly, with joyful expectation, if you realise that

death is a friend and never an enemy. Still further are you on the way, a long way indeed to your goal, if you remain serene above the tumult that may be below, above the pronouncements and the de-pronouncements, above the major and the minor cataclysms that may be convulsing the world: calm, at peace, knowing your own life and living it. Not indifferent, but master. Not deaf, but hearing the Note of your Being above all other song. Not tossed hither and thither in aimless confusion as a plaything of tempests, but riding them out one after another to their ceasings, taking them as they come in the unhurrying stride of your daily lives. Let to-day, of whatever nature, die, so that to-morrow may live. Without death no to-morrow in anything.

Come with me now into the dim past and let me hold before your eyes the mirror of a great Egyptian Phra—Akhnaton, who also lived the Life Magnificent though bodily form succumbed to

spiritual exaltation. For me his magnificence lies in two directions, first for his efforts to concentrate priest-ridden Egypt upon the One Life, and second for his marvellous stand against war. As says Professor Breasted in his *Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*: "Akhnaton was a God-intoxicated man, whose mind responded with marvellous sensitiveness and discernment to the visible evidences of God about him." Never before in the history of the world had been proclaimed so openly and so free from limiting forms the supreme Unity of all Life and the immanence of that Life in all things. "Akhnaton did not permit any graven image to be made of the Aton," by which name he called the Father of All, the Universal Life. "The True God, said the king, had no form; and he held to this opinion throughout his life. The symbol of the religion was the sun's disk, from which there extended numerous rays . . . but this symbol

was not worshipped." As Professor Weigall declares in *The Life and Times of Akhnaton*: "Akhnaton, stemming with his hand the flood of tradition, boldly proclaimed God to be a life-giving, intangible essence: the *heat* which is in the sun. He was 'the living Aton'—that is to say, the power which produced and sustained the energy and movement of the sun. . . . The flaming glory of the sun was the most practical symbol of the godhead, and the warm rays of sunshine constituted the most obvious connection between heaven and earth; but always Akhnaton attempted to raise the eyes of the thinkers beyond this visible or understandable expression of divinity, to strain them upwards in the effort to discern that which was 'behind the veil'." I have no time to pursue this most fascinating theme or to depict for you in detail this splendid monarch radiating a wondrous truth, but let me just quote the beginning of that great

hymn of his from which the Hebrews themselves derived the 104th Psalm:

Thy dawning is beautiful in the horizon
of heaven,

O living Aton, beginning of life !

When Thou risest in the eastern horizon
of heaven,

Thou fillest every land with Thy beauty ;
For Thou art beautiful, great, glittering,
high over the earth ;

Thy rays, they encompass the lands,
even all Thou hast made.

Thou art Ra, and Thou hast carried them
all away captive ;

Thou bindest them by Thy love.

Though Thou art afar, Thy rays are on
earth ;

Though Thou art on high, Thy footprints
are the day.

The more I study Akhnaton the more I
rejoice in the simple directness of his
teaching, a simple directness all the more
magnificent by contrast with the solidi-
fied complexities around him. Con-
trast indeed seems to be of the essence of
the Life Magnificent, and nowhere is it
more in evidence than in the second of
Akhnaton's two great gifts to the world.

In startling contrast to his people, and specially to those immediately around him, to his advisers, to his friends, to his generals, even to his confidential intimates, was his conscientious objection to war. How mercilessly all these scorned "that God of Peace who was called the Only One! How they laughed at the young Pharaoh who had set aside the sword for the psalter, who hoped to rule his restless dominions by love alone"! "One stands amazed," says Professor Weigall, "at the reckless idealism, the beautiful folly, of this Pharaoh who, in an age of turbulence, preached a religion of peace to seething Syria. Three thousand years later mankind is still blindly striving after these same ideals in vain. Nowadays one is familiar with the doctrine: a greater than Akhnaton has preached it, and has died for it. To-day God is known to us, and the peace of God is a thing hoped for; but at that far-off period, thirteen hundred years before the

birth of Christ, two or three centuries before the age of David and Solomon, and many a year before the preaching of Moses, one is utterly surprised to behold the true light shining forth for a short moment like the sun through a rift in the clouds, and one knows that it has come too soon. Mankind, even now not ready, was then most wholly unprepared, and the price which Egypt paid for the ideals of her Pharaoh was no less than the loss of her dominions."

Allowance must be made for the Professor's delusion that all Truth really started from the time of the Christ, but I call to your attention his phrases "reckless idealism" and "beautiful folly". The carping may point the finger of scorn to the words "reckless" and "folly". But I for one, and I should hope you for others, am quite prepared to be both reckless and foolish if to the former I may add idealism and to the latter beauty. The Life Magnificent must, I

think, start with not a little recklessness and not a little foolishness. Before we can know where we are going we must not know where we are going. Before we can become balanced in the heights we must nose-dive to the depths—without crashing, I hope—no less than ascend in spasms of vertical vertigo to airs rarefied and intoxicating. It is for this reason that I place before you the mirror of Akhnaton. I think he was magnificent, extraordinary ; though I cannot help thinking, too, that there may have been not a little recklessness and folly in his magnificence. His splendid efforts to lift Egypt out of the slavery of innumerable religious forms may hardly have been as wise as we now see they might have been, magnificent—I use the word deliberately—though was the Life he offered in place of deadening, tyrannising forms. Then, his conscientious objection to war stood strangely against the most heart-rending, the most pathetic appeals of peoples,

soldiers, generals, who saw themselves cast away, apparently betrayed, and mighty Mother-Egypt brought to her knees in shame. "What mattered all the philosophies in the world, and all the gods in heaven, when Egypt's great dominions were being wrested from her? The splendid Lebanon, the white kingdoms of the sea, Askalon and Ashdod, Tyre and Sidon, Simyra and Byblos, the hills of Jerusalem, Kadesh and the great Orontes, the fair Jordan, Tunip, Aleppo, the distant Euphrates. . . What counted a creed against these? God? The truth? The only god was He of Battles, who had led Egypt into Syria; the only truth the doctrine of the sword, which had held her there for so many years."

But one never knows. We do not know the anguish Egypt's desolation may have cost him, the anguish he had to bear as he refused military help time after time to those outposts of his empire which were heroically fighting to the last against odds

that were soon to overwhelm. May he not well have been a trusted Agent of the Great Plan, as was, we are told, Baron Hompesch when he surrendered Malta to the British. Defeat and failure in this world are often perceived otherwise in the worlds of our Elders. I do not know, though considering all things I should without hesitation be inclined to regard him as a Messenger of the Great White Lodge. At all events he died at the age of thirty years, broken in health, broken in heart that principles he loved beyond himself were dying with him, for Egypt seemed to be ready neither for the teaching of the Universal Immanence of God nor for the doctrine of Non-Resistance, though maybe the notes of these were to be sounded. Yet Akhnaton stood for these, lived for these, in very truth died for these; and for my own part I care little whether he was right or wrong. *C'était magnifique, même si ce n'était pas la guerre.* It was magnificent, even if it was not war. Let us look at

ourselves in this three thousand year old mirror. Have we in us aught of the spirit of Akhnaton? It is splendid no less to-day than it was splendid then. It brought its own glory to Egypt and to him who was its frail vehicle, even though it broke while it glorified. It shall bring gifts no less splendid to the world of to-day and to those through whom it shines. But who has the courage to be himself? Or, should I ask, who is there that is himself? Who has a great Self to be?

So far we have had three glimpses—each different from the others—of Lives Magnificent. We have looked upon the world through the eyes of Byron. We have gazed through the magic of Beethoven. And Akhnaton has shown us something of that indescribable beauty which in his case was dearly purchased with loneliness and ill-health. We have looked upon magnificences, and let there be no cavilling that at every moment of their lives Byron, Beethoven and Akhnaton did not—in our

own poor light—always stand upon the higher peaks of their being. My point is that they had very lofty summits in their ranges *and that they did stand on these*. Let me ask you if you have heights such as theirs? Have you risen with me to their splendid peaks in the Himalayan range of Greatness? Have you at least ascended even if you have naught of your own commensurate? And—the whole point and purpose of my address—have you, thus ascending, found that you too have such peaks in your own range, that you too have a place in this Himalayan range of Greatness, that you too are a height of some magnitude at least, or have you determined that such peaks shall be in your own range, that you shall become a towering height in the universal range of Greatness? If thus you know, or if thus you determine, then my purpose is being achieved, for if you *know* it is well, and if you *determine* it is also well, for not one of us but has his place in the Universal Range of Himalayan Greatness;

and to determine to be is in reality to begin to discover what is already there. Are you, then, beginning to grow conscious of your own majesty—a majesty different, surely, from all majesties you know, yet a majesty indeed? Are you beginning to be stirred into your own Life Magnificent? Are the Gods without summoning you to know yourself the God you are?

The last thing I should wish would be to stir you but to imitate Byron or Beethoven or Akhnaton. At best you could be but a poor imitation, a feeble copy. But you can be a wonderful yourself. And if you thrill to Lives Magnificent, you are stirring, changing, growing, into the magnificence of your own life—a consummation devoutly to be wished. My longing is that we should all grow tired of our mediocrity, tired of our smallness, tired of our self-satisfaction, tired of our placidity, tired of our sameness, tired of being but spineless specks in eddies of purposeless dust. I long that we should exhilaratingly stretch

our limbs—our limbs physical, emotional, mental, spiritual—to their fullest measure, and arise giants among men. The world needs giants. The world needs women and men who know themselves and give themselves abundantly, fearlessly, triumphantly, with a sparkling sense of the Truth it is their glory to disclose. The world needs women and men who must needs proclaim and prophesy, who, as Luther said of himself, can do no other. We need not accept, but surely we must not laugh because they give, often at great cost; for true giving never counts the cost. Hear this spirit portrayed by yet another Life Magnificent—Annie Besant—in words to me among the most splendid ever uttered:

Many years have passed, [she writes in her "Autobiography,"] since, in a quiet country vicarage, I took a vow to be true to truth all through my life, and to follow her wherever she might lead me. On that first moment, when she called me, I left home, social position, friends, and went out alone

into the world with my child in my arms. Later, her cry came to me once more, demanding that last wealth of mine, and I laid then my child at her feet as I had laid all else, so that I might keep unstained the loyalty I had sworn to her. And for the rest of my life, as in its past, this one fealty I will keep unstained. If friendships fail me they must fail; if human love leave me it must go; so that I be true to that one truth I follow, and strive to do her service in the world in which I live. She may lead me into the desert, I will go after her; she may strip me of all love, I will still cling to her; and I ask for no loftier epitaph on my tombstone than this:

She tried to follow Truth.

And let me for my own satisfaction, but I hope no less for yours, give myself yet one more glimpse into the Life Magnificent lived—God be praised—in our very midst, the towering triumph of our age. Annie Besant is writing of the famous sale of the Knowlton pamphlet by Charles Bradlaugh—another Life Magnificent—and herself, now over half a century ago:

We took a little shop, printed the pamphlet, and sent notice to the police that we would commence the sale at a certain day

and hour, and ourselves sell the pamphlet, so that no one else might be endangered by our action. We resigned our offices in the National Secular Society that we might not injure the Society, but the Executive first, and then the Annual Conference, refused to accept the resignations . . . Could we, the teachers of a lofty morality, venture to face a prosecution . . . and risk the ruin of our future, dependent as that was on our fair fame? To Mr. Bradlaugh it meant, as he felt, the almost certain destruction of his parliamentary position, the forging by his own hands of a weapon that in the hands of his foes would be well-nigh fatal. To me it meant the loss of the pure reputation I prized, the good name I had guarded—scandal the most terrible a woman could face. But I had seen the misery of the poor, of my sister-women with children crying for bread . . . Should I set my own safety, my own good name, against the helping of these? Did it matter that my reputation should be ruined, if its ruin helped to bring remedy to this otherwise hopeless wretchedness of thousands? What was worth all my talk about self-sacrifice and self-surrender, if, brought to this test, I failed?

But there lies the difference between the Life Magnificent and the life yet so to become. We do set our own safety

against service. We do set our own good name against self-surrender. It does matter to us that our reputations should be ruined, even though their ruin may help the world to happiness. In our scales respectability outweighs truth, and safety outweighs sacrifice. In our lives we count the cost, and there is a price beyond which we refuse to go. In Lives Magnificent respectability counts for nothing, safety is thrown to the winds, and they are rich enough in happy determination to pay any price that may be demanded from them for a self-expression which holds nothing back. Well may we glory in the Life Magnificent of our President, our noble and heroic Friend, but her life is no less dangerous to us than precious. Woe to us if we cast away, ignore, the insistent demands of this friendship. Woe to us if, watching her treading in our very midst her own path glorious, we do not set our feet upon our own pathways. Woe to us if we do not learn to glory in ourselves, if we do not

ardently determine to shine to the fulness of our Light, a Light so compellingly mirrored for us in her own exalted Being.

And now I turn to another mirror into which I ask you to gaze if perchance you perceive yourselves therein. In one sense this particular mirror is not a life as was that of Byron or of Akhnaton, as was that of Beethoven, as was and is that of Besant. It was an episode. It was a culmination—in the case of some *the* culmination. But for my purposes it matters not whether we look at an episode or at a whole life. The very episode itself is part of the life, depends for its existence upon the life as a whole, has its magnificence because there is essential magnificence in the life of which it is a part. So, even if we are only gazing at an episode magnificent, yet are we gazing at a Life Magnificent, for the magnificence of the episode depends upon the essential ingredients of the life.

You have surely heard of the Mount Everest Expedition. You have surely rejoiced either in the larger volumes of record or in the fascinating shorter pictures by Sir Francis Younghusband and Captain Noel. You know of the hardships, the terrible hardships, of the preliminary stages, of the slow yet unflinching struggle over the lesser heights. Then comes the final stage. Norton and Somervell are the first to challenge the Goddess-Mother of the world—Chomolungma, as the Tibetans call this Queen of Heights. They had to give up “when within only about three hours’ climb of the summit. There it was, not half a mile away, but one after another they had to turn back. Immortal glory was almost within their grasp; but they were too faint to clutch it. Yet their faintness was no faint-heartedness. No stouter-hearted man or one of more indomitable courage than Somervell exists, or a more collected and persistently tenacious man than Norton”. What prevented

them from achieving? Their comradeship with their porters. Time after time they had to rescue these gallant helpers burdened with loads, and when the supreme moment came for the final ascent they were already played out. They lost the prize of conquering Everest, but gained the nobler prize of a comradeship which no personal considerations whatever could break. Here is an episode magnificent and therefore a Life Magnificent.

Then came the turn of Mallory and Irvine. They had already been heartened by the soul-stirring description Somervell had given of his experience of the stupendous height he had reached—a height about that of Kangchenjunga:

The view from the topmost points that we reached, and, indeed, all the way up, was quite beyond words for its extent and magnificence. Gyaching and Choyo, among the highest mountains in the world, were over a thousand feet beneath. Around them we saw a perfect sea of fine peaks—all giants among mountains, all as dwarfs below us. The splendid dome of Pumori, the finest of

Everest's satellites, was but an incident in the vast array of peak upon peak. Over the plain of Tibet a distant range gleamed 200 miles away. The view, indeed, was indescribable, and one simply seemed to be above everything in the world and to have a glimpse almost of a god's view of things.

So it seems that in heights physical there is a counterpart in some measure of heights spiritual.

A glimpse *almost* of a god's view of things, says Younghusband in comment, but what if he had actually reached the summit? So far he had seen the view of only one side and Everest still towered nearly a thousand feet above him. But from the summit he would have seen all round; his view of things would verily have been a god's. Everest itself would have been humbled beneath his feet. Man's dominion over the mountain would have been finally established. Mite as man is he would have shown that he was greater than the mountain. And far and wide he would have surveyed his domain . . . And the sight of him there in his hard-won glory on the pinnacle of the world would, he might be sure, give new heart to many another and heighten endeavour in every field.

Let Odell, the splendid comrade of them all, tell the thrilling tale of the final

glorious tragedy, and you will be stirred, as little else can stir you, to make your own ascents to your own summits, undaunted by failure, untouched by despair.

On the day Mallory and Irvine were to make the attempt on the summit, I went up to the 25,000 feet Depot to be in close support of them. I was geologizing on the way, and I made short trips in the neighbourhood of the camps.

At about half-past twelve there was a sudden clearing of the atmosphere; and the entire summit of Everest was unveiled. A belt of driving mist sweeping across the northern face failed to reach as far as the summit and left the final pyramid standing out clear against the blue sky. Suddenly I noticed high up in the almost perpendicular wilderness a moving black speck silhouetted on the second step at the foot of the final pyramid, then I saw another speck move up to join the first. It was no other than Mallory and Irvine within 600 feet of the summit. They seemed to be going strong. I dropped my geologizing, took out my glasses and rivetted my attention on the spot. The wind was tearing round me. Then the mist swept up, and the whole fascinating vision vanished. I waited and watched again, but the mist

never cleared, although, I think, up where they were there was little or no mist. But that was all I saw. When I last saw them they were going strong.

Mallory and Irvine were hours behind their scheduled time for the final ascent. Night was beginning to enfold Everest in darkness, and the utmost they could do would be to descend as far as the 27,000 feet camp. Up goes Odell next day.

At last I reached 27,000 feet and found their camp. I approached the tents and called out, but there was no answer. I went up and looked in. The tents were empty.

Back goes Odell to 25,000 feet spending a night of terrible anxiety, himself exhausted. The next morning he struggles up once more to the 27,000 feet camp.

I dragged myself up to the two tents, which I found standing as before. I went to them and pulled the flaps of the tents apart and looked in. They were empty. The two men must have perished. There was no trace of them. There was no written message left by either of them. I looked at everything. It was beyond my power to search higher up the mountain. The men

had been missing from their camp for two nights and they could not possibly survive.

Odell then makes to his comrades far beneath that terrible signal—sleeping-bags in the shape of a T—announcing that all hope was lost, and receives in reply the order to descend.

But before departing, says Younghusband, Odell glanced up at the mighty summit above him. Ever and anon it deigned to unveil its cloud-wreathed features. It seemed to look down in cold indifference on him, mere puny man; and, to his petition to yield up the secret of his friends, howl derision in gusts of wind. And yet, as he gazed again, another mood appeared to creep over her haunting features. There seemed to be something alluring in that towering presence. He was almost fascinated. He realised that any mountaineer must be thus fascinated; that he who approached close must ever be led on, and, oblivious of all obstacles, seek to reach that most sacred and highest place of all.

It seemed to Odell that his friends also must have been thus enchanted: for else why should they tarry. And perhaps this enchantment of the summit is the solution of the mystery. For a great mountain

invites as well as defies ; and the nearer the summit men reach the intenser is the attraction. The mountain will extract from him the last grain of energy and the last flicker of courage ere she yields to his persistence. She will compel his greatness out of man, and make him put forth more and more of himself. But for that very reason he is enchanted by her : she has made him be his best.

The mountain is like much else in this world. One of the great mysteries of existence is that what is most awful and most terrible does not deter man but draws him to it—to his temporary disaster, perhaps, but in the end to an intensity of joy which without the risk he could never have experienced.

I make no apology for this long quotation, for it so entirely expresses somewhat of that which I am endeavouring to convey to you, of that atmosphere of heights which it is so glorious to breathe. Somervell, Norton, Odell, Mallory, Irvine—all men fit for mountains, whether mountains physical or otherwise ; men in whom the Life Magnificent is awake and shall carry them onwards and upwards from height to height. And one of the

most beautiful features of these lives of theirs lies in the simplicity of it all. There is no tremendous struggle before the determination is reached to conquer Everest. There is nothing heart-breaking about the decision. There is no sense of dedication to a compelling cause. There is no sense of mission. There is no question of saving the world. There is no question of setting an example. There is nothing ethical or theological or even personal about it all. The whole of the splendid tragedy, if it is to be called a tragedy at all, is just an expression of their own particular *joie de vivre*, of their own particular joy in living. They are so made that the ascent of heights, that the conquest of obstacles, is the commonplace of their lives. They have no thought of doing anything particularly wonderful. What they do is the only thing to do. It is the natural thing to do. What else could they do? What they are comes from within, it is not put on from without. What they do they are. What

they are they do. They do not pretend. There is not even effort, save the effort, perhaps, to drive the body. And that is a matter of course. The ascent of Everest is just part of them. And the failure? Oh well, it is all in the day's work. It is not really failure at all, for they do not sit down under it. *On ne recule que pour mieux sauter.* One only recedes to go better forward. Mallory and Irvine have not failed. They have conquered, for the will to conquer never faltered for an instant; and triumph is to the will and not to the feet. Odell did not fail. Somervell and Norton did not fail. They left nothing undone that could be done. And they have left to us all the splendid example of the magnificence of the joy of true living, of effortless splendour, of the glory of the truly simple life. To quote Blake's fine phrase, in this gallant band "men and mountains meet".

I must now pass on to a totally different example of the Life Magnificent, an

example from the kingdom of animals, wherein so much more is there of the Life Magnificent than we sometimes realise. Nowhere is life more magnificent than in Motherhood, whether, of course, human or non-human. And I want to hold up before you a gem of supreme magnificence, set though it be in human ugliness. I am quoting from the famous Russian author Tourgenieff:

I was on my way home from hunting, and was walking up the garden avenue. My dog was running on in front of me. Suddenly he slackened his pace, and began to steal forward as though he scented game ahead. I looked along the avenue; and I saw on the ground a young sparrow, its beak edged with yellow, and its head covered with soft down. It had fallen from the nest (a strong wind was blowing, and shaking the birches of the avenue); and there it sat and never stirred, except to stretch out its little half-grown wings in a helpless flutter.

My dog was slowly approaching it, when suddenly, darting from the tree overhead, an old black-throated sparrow dropped like a stone right before his nose, and all rumped

and flustered, with a plaintive desperate cry flung itself once, twice, at his open jaws with their great teeth.

It would save its young one : it screened it with its own body ; the tiny frame quivered with terror ; the little cries grew wild and hoarse ; it sank and died. It had sacrificed itself. What a huge monster the dog must have seemed to it ! And yet it could not stay up there on its safe bough. A power stronger than its own will tore it away. My dog stood still, and slunk back disconcerted. Plainly he too had to recognise that power. I called him to me ; and a feeling of reverence came over me as I passed on.

As for Tourgenieff, the less said about him, perhaps, the better. But what of the old sparrow, and of every other mother-creature—human or otherwise—whose power of Love is gorgeous reflection of the universal immanence of the Life Magnificent ? And after all are we humans so very different from the brethren who have yet to enter our kingdom ? Is there less of the Life Magnificent in them than in ourselves ? Could any one of us do more than the “ old black-throated sparrow ” ?

I agree with Walt Whitman when he says:

I think I could turn and live with
animals, they are so placid and self-
contained,

I stand and look at them long and long.

They do not sweat and whine about
their condition,

They do not lie awake in the dark and
weep for their sins,

They do not make me sick discussing
their duty to God,

Not one is dissatisfied, not one is de-
mented with the mania of owning
things,

Not one kneels to another, nor to his
kind that lived thousands of years
ago,

Not one is respectable or unhappy over
the whole earth.

So they bring their relations to me and I
accept them,

They bring me the News of myself, they
evince them plainly in their possession.

I wonder where they get those News,

Did I pass that way huge times ago and
negligently drop them.

Perhaps you will think of the old black-
throated sparrow as you look upon all

living things. Naught that we see around us but has grown at one time or another within the protection of the Mother-Life Magnificent—be it rock or stone, flower or tree, insect or bird, animal or human being. Nor is there aught at any time without the pale of Motherhood.

Earth's crammed with Heaven,
And every common bush afire with
God :

But only he who sees, takes off his
shoes,

says Browning. True, for Motherhood is Heaven ; and earth indeed is *crammed* with Motherhood, afire with Life Magnificent. But who takes off his shoes ? Go where you will and upon you shines, be it dimly or radiantly—and often there will be far more radiance than your dull perception can perceive—the Life Magnificent. So I say with A. E.

Come away, oh, come away ;
We will quench the heart's desire
Past the gateways of the day
In the rapture of the Fire.

I am very conscious of having touched but the fringe of the Life Magnificent in all that I have so far said. In every aspect of life there are innumerable and easily discernible magnificences—easily discernible, that is, to the discerning, some of the first magnitude, others of lesser magnitudes, though I should not like to take upon myself the task of dividing magnificences into magnitudes. I might pass many magnificences by, and many I might exalt beyond their worth, while others I might rate below their value. In very truth, what is there, when we come down to scientific exactitude, that is not magnificent? Viewed close at hand there may appear much that seems distorted and far from magnificent. In terms of time there may be much which we must call the reverse of magnificent. Relatively, we may divide into magnificent and less magnificent and by no means magnificent. But the greater the height from which we view life the

more overwhelming is the magnificence, and that which in terms of nearer view, of time, relatively, seems even ugly, will somehow or other wonderfully fit into the general magnificence—a shadow enhancing the splendour of the overwhelming light. From the standpoint of time, of the nearer view, relatively, no doubt we must *become* magnificent, we must change the sordid and the ugly into the glorious. But be assured that in terms of Eternity this is already done. We have in fact but to become what we already are. We have but to resolve, for by our very resolution the shadow is resolved into the substance of the essence of which it is, the so-called darkness is resolved into the light, the ugly in time is seen as the beautiful in Eternity. Thus is the process of evolution a process of resolution, a process of will, both for the Universal Lord and therefore for all that is of Him. He wills, and by His will is matter resolved. Let us resolve.

Having dealt, then, with individual magnificences, we will conclude with the magnificence universal, to the realisation of which in all its microcosmic and macrocosmic superbness science, philosophy, art, literature, history, religion, all contribute in their own splendid ways, though I am constrained to admit that the ignorance, the pride, of man have from time to time not a little veiled the magnificence by which these various pathways to its realisation is bestrewn. I have no time to illustrate even some among the contributions made by the arts and sciences to such realisation of the Life Magnificent. It is a most fascinating theme, and it would be well worth while to describe, even though necessarily haltingly, the Life Magnificent in terms of Literature, of History, of Geography, of Philosophy, of Religion, of the Arts and Sciences, of the Kingdoms of Nature, and so on. But let us take together a sweeping view of Life as a whole, and we shall see how well

chosen indeed is the adjective "Magnificent".

Let us go back into the infinite past anywhere in Space you like, though there is not much space in Space, since in every cubic inch lies an atom-universe, and pick up a speck of Cosmic Dust. Whence has it come? Leaving aside the question of primordial dust, we may venture to say it has been thrown off by a Sun "having no further use for the same" as people write of things they want to sell. This Sun converged upon Himself, into Himself, retiring beyond the denser planes. And there the speck of dust lies as it were desolate, tossed about, maybe, by the Winds of Space. Yet speck though it be it has had its own evolution. It is not the same as it was before. Nothing is the same as it was before. What happens next? Another Sun—in a state of ineffable Radiance—determines to multiply Himself. He Himself has climbed up the ladder of evolution. He—if you will not misunderstand

me—has been a speck of dust, for a speck of dust is a life, is even more for it is a universe, with its own central sun and revolving planets. And so a universe grew until it became a mighty Radiance. This Radiance willed to multiply, and since the Absolute is ever accommodating to such desire, for the necessary material is to hand in infinite abundance, indeed almost ready-made inasmuch as what has to be multiplied is cosily tucked away in every bit of material, since then, as I say, the Absolute is most accommodating, the Radiance radiates, gathering within His pulsating rhythm vast expanses of Cosmic Dust, churning it into majestic spirals, kneading it, shaping it, until at last balls of Dust come into being, aggregations of microcosmic suns. One such ball the Radiance uses as His vehicle—the Sun we see in the sky is born, other balls are used for other purposes. Planets and all other paraphernalia come into being, and a universe is

in working order. Our speck of dust is there, growing in company with countless fellows as the Radiance literally shines upon them all in the Light of His experience, for light is naught but experience resolved into Power. And thus a Radiance gathers into the Rhythm of His Nature countless myriads of microcosmic suns, and the Dance of a Universe begins. Another Solar System is born to take its place among the countless Solar Systems, some of them incredibly vast and composed of balls of stupendous size, some of them comparatively small like the System to which we belong, some of them ancient beyond all calculation, some of them old, some of them middle-aged, some of them young, some of them in the very throes of birth itself. And as we look upward and outward into the vast vista of Space we may gaze upon some of them. Let us throw a few figures about. Kapteyn, for example, estimates about 40,000,000,000 stars, that is suns—centres of systems, in

our own immediate universe alone, that is the universe to which our little somewhat elderly Solar System belongs. That is a guess just for one universe, and thousands of others may be counted, some comparatively near and others a million and more light-years away; and remember that light travels six million million miles per year, or over 186,000 miles per second. Think, too, that our own Sun, though His mass is 20,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 tons and He has a diameter of 846,000 miles, is as nothing compared with another Sun—Betelgeuse, whose diameter is 300,000,000 miles, has a volume 50,000,000 times the Sun of our own System, and has light of correspondingly greater intensity. Our physical Sun is comparatively small and comparatively old—I refer, of course, to the outer vehicle which we perceive in part, not to the Radiance, the Solar Logos Himself. Think of these innumerable universes, island universes as they are sometimes called, in a

limitless expanse of Mother-Space. Think, then, for a moment of the controlling Power over it all, and of the extraordinary exactitude of every adjustment of every relationship. I have given you the meaningless figures of the mass of our own Sun. But do you realise that, as Professor Eddington tells us, the exact number of noughts matters enormously. He says:

. . . I dare say you would not much mind if there were one or two too many or two few. But Nature *does* mind. When she made the stars she evidently attached great importance to getting the number of o's right.

Why? For a very beautiful reason. Two mighty forces are ever at work throughout manifestation. Light streaming like tremendous wind from within and Unity from without intent on equilibrium and stability. Light says: I change. Unity declares: I maintain. So is there constant change, but with sufficient slow-motion imposed by Unity to enable the necessary change to be got out of change, that is

experience. Now these two forces must themselves be equilibrated so that Light does not get the better of Unity, or Unity the better of Light. And the number of o's in the mass of any star is the marvelously exact equilibration achieved by— Ah! If I only knew by Whom or What! But there it is. Supreme exactitude, and supreme reasons for everything. I have no time to say more of all these wonders, but are we not hemmed in on every side by Life Magnificent, are we not perfectly fitting parts of this Life Magnificent? All we have to do, recognising the sublime Magnificence without, is to know with absolute certainty that there is no less sublime Magnificence within our very selves, indeed that the tiniest fragment of each one of us is itself a sublime Magnificence. Just a few words about this. In the first place, just look at yourselves. Eddington suggests that 10^{27} atoms constitute a human body and that 10^{28} human bodies would go to the formation of a star.

What an infinity, relatively speaking, each one of us is. And each atom itself is a universe with a central sun—the nucleus—and attendant planets, electrons. Even the atom is by no means the ultimate unit, for both nuclei and, as the most recent researches of science show us, even electrons are divisible. So, the atom itself, and note the size of an atom—a drop of water contains several thousand million million atoms, and each atom is one hundred millionth of an inch in diameter, and there is plenty of room within this hundred millionth of an inch for the electron-planets to move freely about—so each atom, I say, is itself divisible as to each constituent part of it we so far know, and where divisibility ends who knows?

But I have not yet done. If you look at a star, a sun, you will find a tremendous commotion within, what has been called a hurly-burly of atoms, electrons and other waves, all in the midst of a hurricane of wind-light.

Dishevelled atoms tear along at 100 miles a second, their normal array of electrons being torn from them in the scrimmage. The lost electrons are speeding 100 times faster to find new resting places. . . . There is almost a collision as an electron approaches an atomic nucleus, but putting on speed it sweeps round in a sharp curve . . . after a thousand narrow shaves, all happening within a thousand millionth of a second, the hectic career is ended . . . the electron is fairly caught, and attached to an atom. But scarcely has it taken up its place when an X-ray bursts into the atom. Sucking the energy of the ray the electron darts off again on its next adventure. I am afraid, says Eddington, the knockabout comedy of modern atomic physics is not very tender towards our æsthetic ideals. The stately drama of stellar evolution turns out to be more like the hair-breadth escapades on the films. The music of the spheres has almost a suggestion of—jazz.

Think of this devastating whirlwind of light, think of the pressure it exercises upon all it meets, think of the atoms shattered into pieces, broken, lame, "ionised" as the proper expression is, think of gravitation exercising a restraining influence. Think of all this in a star, and

then think of all this in yourselves. How catastrophic, how cataclysmic, how stormy, are our lives, for we too are stars, myriads of stars, galaxies of stars. Yet not a single movement anywhere, not a particle of shattering, except under Law and mighty Purpose. Not a single movement anywhere, not a particle of shattering, save to a stupendous End, of which even the most glorious End disclosed to us is but a shadow of a shade. Ever a beyond. Ever a more majestic glory. Naught to which there is not something yet more supreme. And most wonderful of all, as beyond so within. Ever a within. Ever a glory of the less no less majestic than the glory of the more. Whether we look within or without, above or below, the Life Magnificent shines in ordered gradation of Light, shines to the greater glory of Light.

I have applied the phrase "most wonderful of all" to the fact of the utter and complete identity of the smallest microcosm

with the largest macrocosm. But perhaps I should have reserved this superlative for the fact ultimate—ultimate, that is, so far as science, whether occult or overt, has probed—that the essence of Life as we have it in the state of evolution with which we are familiar is a bubble, a cavity, in otherwise continuous ether or matter. This indeed is what Sir Oliver Lodge said a few months ago in his Kelvin lecture to the Institution of Electrical Engineers, and he observes how great the radiation from within must be to withstand the “enormous pressure” from without. How hollow we all are in very truth. We are composed of hollows; and each “hollow,” says Sir Oliver Lodge, “sustains itself because of its electric charge. The electric charge produces a tension tending to make it expand. This is balanced by the external pressure.” Note here how mass is determined in microcosm as in macrocosm. And he gives calculations to show that “the

radius of the hollow . . . is of the same order as the recognised electronic charge". So the Life Magnificent, and magnificent it certainly is, is the Life Hollow. Within universal matter the Life Universal stirs, summoned to the mighty tension-thrills of expanding magnificence by Light-Messengers from a glorious Radiance, and as it stirs it presses back, away from itself, that which has heretofore been in comparatively continuous contiguity. A hollow is formed. Bubbles are formed. Vortices within and without. Pulsations. Waves. What else? Matter? Perhaps. Yet modern physics tends to resolve everything in terms of pulsation. Says a writer in *Nature* (22-9-28):

A beam of light seems a simple thing, but now the structure of light has become puzzling and has acquired some of the properties of matter. Reciprocally, matter has acquired some of the properties of light. The particle and the wave are more closely related than a few years ago we should have thought it possible to imagine. The quantum theory made waves behave something like

particles ; conversely, the new dynamics makes particles behave something like waves.

So we are streaming, throbbing, in all directions. What do we send forth ? That which some send forth I have tried to disclose to you, and it follows that that which some send forth all can send forth, though the wave-lengths may differ to any extent.

Let us then shine, throb, stream, splendidly, ecstatically if you will, in all directions. Let us, to quote Wordsworth, tolerate,

. . . indignities of Time
And, from the centre of Eternity
All finite motions over-ruling, (live)
In glory immutable.

I conclude my address with the last lines of the great Ode to the Sun by a deservedly celebrated Frenchman—Edmond Rostand. He worships Our Lord the Sun who by His wondrous magic perfumes the air with roses, sets the bush afire with God, takes the humble tree and divinely

transforms it, and in the seed implants the tree of Life, without whom all things would be but as they are, but by whose splendour all things become glorious. May it be with each one of us that because of ourselves, because we ourselves shine upon ourselves, because of Sun shining upon suns, we unfold to glorious apotheoses and point to the Way of Apotheosis for all.

Je t'adore, Soleil ! Tu mets dans l'air
des roses,
Des flammes dans la source, un dieu
dans le buisson !
Tu prends un arbre obscur et tu l'apo-
theoses !
O Soleil ! toi sans qui les choses en
seraient que ce qu'elles sont !

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